

## Risk Factor Study

The Food Protection Program (FPP) at the Indiana State Department of Health (ISDH) is currently undertaking a risk factor study (RFS) to assess the prevalent foodborne illness risk factors present in the retail food establishments inspected by ISDH FPP. This study is one of the activities called for in the Voluntary National Retail Food Regulatory Program Standards (VNRFRPS) to which the FPP is enrolled.

The VNRFRPS entails nationally agreed upon goals and objectives that an agency responsible for inspecting retail food facilities should meet. These objectives are broken up into nine standards which can be met independently. These are:

### Standards:

1. Regulatory Foundation
2. Trained Regulatory Staff
3. Inspection Program Based on HACCP Principles
4. Uniform Inspection Program
5. Foodborne Illness and Food Defense Preparedness and Response
6. Compliance and Enforcement
7. Industry and Community Relations
8. Program Support and Resources
9. Program Assessment

To learn more about the program standards, visit: <http://www.fda.gov/Food/GuidanceRegulation/RetailFoodProtection/ProgramStandards/>

The risk factor study is an element under standard 9 of the VNRFRPS. The study is meant to determine the most prevalent foodborne illness risk factors present at the retail facilities inspected by the FPP. The standards

then call for deliberate intervention measures that address the prominent risk factor(s) raised by the study. The risk factor study is then repeated at 60 month interval to check the effectiveness of the implemented strategies. The first risk factor study serves as the baseline survey forming a reference point to compare subsequent studies.

This leads to improved efficiency in resource utilization by the FPP as the most prevalent foodborne illness risk factors are given a higher priority. For instance, analyzing the results of the risk factor study reveals cold holding is a prevalent risk. This means FPP food inspectors will need to give more time to working with operators to assess the cold holding processes which will hopefully improve overall compliance on this risk factor.

Ed Norris is contracted with the FPP to conduct its RFS. He is highly suited for this task having retired as a standardized food inspector with the ISDH. Below he describes what a typical RFS inspection looks like.

Inspecting food establishment facilities for the RFS is not quite like conducting a regular inspection. With only "risk factors" considered (generally the "critical" items directly affecting food safety) one doesn't have to be concerned about other areas. These are not "regulatory" inspections, but more like a "standardization" inspection, but with fewer areas to observe. These inspections look for areas of non-compliance, not necessarily all instances of a violation.

The inspector must still ask the questions concerning menu, food preparation, food flow, illness reporting policy, etc. Answers will supplement observations and lead to identifying areas out of compliance.

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# The Future of CodePal

The objective of CodePal, the current electronic data collection system for food protection inspection and investigation information, is to have a long term electronic data collection system that is a more comprehensive tool for gathering, reporting and studying Indiana food establishment inspection and investigation information. Since Indiana's food safety regulatory authorities include multiple program areas of the Indiana State Department of Health (ISDH), 93 local health departments and 3 universities, it is important to have one database from which we may learn more about the big picture of food protection in Indiana.

**The goal is to have current data that can be effectively used by the state and local food protection programs and improve food safety and defense education and enforcement throughout the state.** A central database can help to identify potential disease causing conditions and/or food establishments that will help regulators mitigate these situations more expeditiously.

ISDH's Food Protection Pro-

gram and Office of Technology and Compliance are assisting additional local health departments with obtaining and implementing the use of CodePal. By utilizing the new CodePal Installation Package, regulatory authorities are now able to perform the installation at their convenience. Once the package is received, users can simply move through the instructions and perform each step until CodePal is installed. Due to this new development, we estimate having 42 jurisdictions online and contributing to CodePal by the end of 2015.

For those regulatory authorities who already have well established food inspection systems, we will be introducing a tool called Dyna Sync that will allow these departments to import inspection data directly into the CodePal database on a weekly basis. Since this tool is in the development stage, this crucial element is not yet ready for everyone. The development and refinement of the food protection information import tool relies on local health departments who have the capacity to work with the ISDH to develop the process of transferring their data into the central database. We esti-

mate having at least one local health department importing data into CodePal, by the end of the year. For those regulatory authorities who want to import data, but do not have the information technology personnel to extract their own data, ISDH will be making a plan to provide additional assistance. This will take time and a standard process will need to be established. ISDH is working on a single template/file format that will be our standard, allowing regulatory authorities to extract their own data and place it in the standard file format before importing it.

The future of CodePal will rely on the continued cooperation of Indiana food protection professionals to gather and report food establishment inspection and investigation information. This collaboration of efforts and the utilization of this information will be an important tool in ensuring food safety in Indiana.

*Contributions by Irene Jameson, ISDH Office of Technology and Compliance and Krista Click, Director, ISDH Food Protection Program*

## Purdue Teams Wins Food Safety Prize

The Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) Food Safety Challenge announced its 2014 grand prize winner, Purdue University, and the \$300,000 prize.

Purdue's team developed a physical method for concentrating Salmonella to detectable levels using automated microfiltration, which could decrease sample preparation time from 24 to 48 hours to a range of 2 to 3 hours. Michael Ladisch, distinguished professor and director at Purdue University, leads the team and is joined by Eduardo Ximenes, Kirk Foster, Seockmo Ku, Amanda Deering and Thomas Kreke. The team plans to further develop their cell concentration prototype into a commercial

system for food safety laboratories to utilize.

### **Congratulations to Purdue's team!**

Sources:

<http://www.purdue.edu/newsroom/releases/2015/Q3/purdue-university-innovation-wins-fda-food-safety-challenge.html>

[Food Safety Magazine, August 4, 2015](#)

## VNRFRPS News



**Delanaaz Daruwala, MPH**

New VNRFRPS Project Coordinator  
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## Food Geek to Chic: equipment for your best inspection

While I can't remember a time that I had an ultimate fail with equipment, there have been times where I thought I was prepared. However, due to my lack of foresight, preparation or the overwhelming conditions the inspection could have been better, my day less stressful, the public better served if my equipment bag were fully or better supplied. So let's start from the top, what goes into your inspection kit for the maximum performance of food inspections? Let's start with the outside and dive into the dark depths later.

I believe that what makes your inspection kit is very personal to each inspector but it comes down to comfort, confidence, accessibility and dependability. The bag, fanny pack, case or clipboard you use has to be comfortable enough that you don't have to place it on any food contact surface to use your hands. Over the years, I have used many different bags and feel the most confident on inspections with a shoulder cross over bag that does not swing too far from my body to contaminate the kitchen. Hopefully with just the right amount of pockets for all my needed gear but without so many that things are forever lost like leaking ink pens and the quat kit that always migrates. The bag has to be accessible enough to allow me to reach in with one hand and find the needed item, no pockets or pouches too small as to have to dig. It's also important that nothing "pooches out" so far that the weight of equipment spills out at inopportune times. If the bag is made of cloth, canvas, imitation leather or plastic, the material has to be dependable enough that sharp equipment will not tear through to be damaged or damage me! The construction should be strong and washable so if soiled, it can be washed before the

next inspection. **As an inspector, you are only as good as your equipment.** A side pocket for your notebook is valuable. Easy to slide in and retrieve gracefully without getting hung up as I make observations.



Pictured: State Fair 2015: Stanley Danao, Mark Mattox, Hank Wolfe, Eric Eldridge and Jordan Young

Depending on your department policy, a bound notebook may be required as court evidence, as the pages torn leave a true paper trail. My personal favorite is a spiral notebook so I can turn pages and easily take notes. It is super cheap and easy to use. This may seem elementary, however, make sure that you have multiple writing utensils that work. Recently inspectors attending the Indiana Environmental Health Association (IEHA) 2014 Fall Conference were gifted pens that write under any conditions. If your paper is wet, greasy or you are in the walk-in freezer in the negative digits, it still works. I found it perfect for rain splattered note taking at the fair. **If you don't document, it didn't happen, so take notes as you go along.**

For those of us who discover on a long day that your last pen is now defunct, make sure to not throw dead equipment back into the inspection kit in haste to do your exit interview. Hoarding dying equipment is downright annoying, when

you're on a mission, dispose of it and move on!

One of the most used tools in our kits should always be our measuring devices. Don't be a slacker before heading out. Take it from me, being challenged on the accuracy of your equipment is an embarrassment to the inspector and our profession. Do it right and compare the accuracy of your thermocouple/thermometer before you leave your department. Make an ice slurry and do a comparison of multiple thermometers. I always carry at least three, a thermocouple, a lollipop and some button tops to drop in refrigeration equipment. That way I am safe if I drop one or a battery starts to fail. If possible, send your thermocouple into the manufacture to have it calibrated once a year and calibrate in house once a week.

Validation and documentation of these records are important as our departments work towards accreditation.

Also if you are using a "radar gun", aka "infrared thermometer", make sure you follow the instructions. Pulling it out like some cowboy, aiming it and shooting a temperature is not cool if you are coming straight from a humid kitchen into the walk-in cooler. Also know how the "cone" works and remember that you are only getting a surface temperature of food. **Be a role model and demonstrate to educate the best practice of using this type of thermometer.** A couple refrigerator thermometers are easy to stash and come back to.

A light meter is also important. How dark is dark? **Good habits make better inspectors.**

Continuing on with the measuring tools, have your sanitizing test strips/kit within easy reach. Know the difference between your sanitizing chemicals to use the right test kit. If the sanitizer buckets or **sink**

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# Trans fats are no longer GRAS

FDA announced June 16 that artificial trans fats are being removed from the GRAS list (generally recognized as safe) and gives manufacturers until June 2018 to complete the transition. This is not a new issue and for many years nutrition and medical experts have sounded the alarm on how dangerous this substance is. The Indiana State Fair banned trans fat cooking oil several years ago.

Common sources are:

- Coffee creamers
- Crackers, cookies, cakes, frozen pies and other baked goods
- Fast food
- Frozen pizza
- Ready-to-use frostings
- Refrigerated dough prod-



ucts such as biscuits and cinnamon rolls

•Snack foods such as microwave popcorn

•Vegetable shortenings and stick margarines

The nutrition label panel lists fats so the consumer can see if any trans fats are in the product. Current products on the market may list 0 grams when there is less than .5 gram per serving.

Plans are to improve the nutrition panel so in the future, it will be easier to understand all fats and other nutrients in a serving.

For more information about trans fats, visit these sites.

Press Release: <http://www.fda.gov/NewsEvents/Newsroom/PressAnnouncements/ucm451237.htm>

Federal Register Notice (06/17/2015): <https://www.federalregister.gov/articles/2015/06/17/2015-14883/determinations-partially-hydrogenated-oils>

FDA Voice Blog: <http://blogs.fda.gov/fdavoices/index.php/2015/06/protecting-consumers-from-trans-fat/>

Medline Plus: [http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/news/fullstory\\_153125.html](http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/news/fullstory_153125.html)

By Sharon Farrell, MS, RD,  
ISDH Food Protection

## Risk Factor Study

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It speaks well for the present food protection staff that in total, very few violations have been documented. One positive surprise was the high percentage of operators that have a written employee illness policy. Nearly all have had a certified food handler when required.

One area that has been noted is the lack of hand washing prior to putting on gloves. The most common out of compliance factor noted so far has been cold holding above 41° F. The refrigeration units involved have all been reach-in open front coolers, often notorious for temperature control problems. With the food products moving quickly, this may not have been a serious food safety issue, or a regulatory violation, but for purposes of the

Standards, they were out of compliance.

With these inspections, a letter of explanation is given to the Person-In-Charge, but no violations are marked and no inspection report is left.

The risk factor study of retail facilities under the jurisdiction of the FPP is ongoing and should be completed by the end of the year.

By Ed Norris, VNRFRPS Contractor, ISDH FPP and Stephen Fa-  
koyejo, former VNRFRPS Coordinator

## Acknowledgement

Funds from the cooperative agreement between the FDA and ISDH cover the cost of this study.

FDA website: <http://www.fda.gov/Food/GuidanceRegulation/RetailFoodProtection/ProgramStandards/ucm245409.htm>

# ServSafe Certificate Updated

## SERVSAFE e-CERTIFICATES

For all exams after May 1, 2015, ServSafe will no longer be sending certificates to Instructors (who have been responsible for sending certificates to students).

Certificates can now be received by the student within a few days instead of the usual 2 to 3 weeks.

Students will be able to log in to ServSafe.com and print their certificates. Employers and regulatory officials will be able to access the certificate information.

## NEW e-CERTIFICATE

They include a QR code that can be scanned to re-direct to a look up tool to validate certificates by employers and regulatory officials. Where it used to take 2 to 3 weeks to get results, the grade will now be ready to view within 3-5 days.

Students will be able to print their certificate and share their certificate information with their employer or regulatory official. They may also request a certificate to be sent for \$10.

Certificates can also be validated by entering the stu-

dent's name, certificate number and state. This adds another layer of authenticity to the certificate.

The screenshot shows the ServSafe website interface. At the top, there are navigation tabs for Students, Instructors/Proctors, Administrators, and Purchase. Below these, the 'MY EXAMS' section is visible. It contains a table with columns for CLASS, COURSE, DATE, SCORE, STATUS, EXPIRATION DATE, and buttons for SEND MY CERTIFICATE and PRINT REPRINT. A red arrow points to the 'SHARE MY CERTIFICATE INFORMATION' link below the table.



The screenshot shows the 'Find or Validate Certificates' search tool on the ServSafe website. It includes input fields for Last Name, Certificate Number, and a dropdown for State. Below these fields is a table with columns for Student, Cert#, Exam Date, Expires, Instructor, Sponsor, Program, State, and Valid? The table contains one entry for Jeffrey Scarpa.

Contributed by Deb Scott, IOM, Director of Operations, Restaurant and Lodging Association of Indiana  
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## In Memoriam:

Stephanie Mohn, 48, passed away on April 18, 2015. At the time of her death, Stephanie was representing "industry" on the Indiana Retail Food Rule Revision Focus Group. Stephanie was co-chair of the 2012 National Conference for Food Protection (CFP) local arrangements committee held in Indianapolis. Thanks to Stephanie, significant funds were raised to support the meeting and provide scholarships. As a passionate leader in food protection, she was active in IEHA and CFP in many leadership positions.



Pictured: 2012 CFP Chairs: Rich Linton, Stephanie Mohn, Kelli Whiting and Scott Gilliam.

## New foods—HEMP



### **much agricultural potential for growing hemp.**

If you have shopped at Costco, you will find Hemp seeds right next to Chia seeds. Unlike Chia, there have not been any recalls to date on Hemp seeds. You may be thinking – how are these ok to be sold? You may be seeing them show up at booths at Farmers Markets as hemp brownies made from hemp flour. For now the hemp in stores must be imported, usually from Canada, where the seed can be grown legally and is approved for U.S. import. So these brownies may indeed be from an approved food source.

Easily digestible, hemp seeds are being marketed as one of the most nutritious specialty foods in the world. But do not confuse hemp seed from the plant *Cannabis sativa* L. with the marijuana plant even though they are from the same family and closely resemble each other. This seed has less than .3% (virtually none), Tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), the psychoactive ingredient responsible for the high from smoking marijuana. One researcher noted that you would need to eat seeds from an entire football field before coming close to a marijuana THC dose.

Hemp seeds and oil are credited

Native Hoosiers will tell you that hemp used to grow wild everywhere indicating **Indiana is a great environment with** with increasing energy, normalizing blood cholesterol, helping arthritis, smoothing skin, improving immunity and more. It is an interesting seed, nutritionally, in that it supposedly has all 20 amino acids including the 9 that our bodies cannot produce. Most vegetarian foods by contrast, need to be combined in order to get a complete set of amino acids to build proteins.

It is also a rich source of the



polyunsaturated essential fatty acids, Omega-6 Linoleic and Omega-3 Linolenic.

Other uses for Hemp is as a bio-fuel alternative to gasoline, and it has been used to make rope, paper and building materials and once was used in Levis Jeans until the supply dried up.

In 1970, the federal government banned growing all hemp in the U.S., both low THC and marijuana grade due the propensity to grow psychoactive marijuana and the difficulty in controlling the growth.

Then a provision in the 2014 federal Farm bill opened the door for universities and state departments of agriculture to begin cultivating industrial hemp for limited purposes. Farming trade organiza-

tions are understandably lobbying to be able to grow the product and see lifting on the ban as a great new crop for this state. Indiana is now one of thirteen states with a statute establishing commercial industrial hemp programs. In 2014 and 2015, IC 15-15-13-1 to 15-15-13-17 were passed with the following provisions:

- Authorizes the production of, possession of, scientific study of, and commerce in industrial hemp in Indiana by license holders.

- Industrial hemp is an agricultural product that is subject to regulation by the State Seed Commissioner.

- The State Seed Commissioner adopts rules and oversees licensing, production, and management of industrial hemp and agricultural hemp seed.

- The State Seed Commissioner sets the standards for application for hemp license and registration.

See Office of State Chemist, Seed:

[http://www.oisc.purdue.edu/seed/industrial\\_hemp.html](http://www.oisc.purdue.edu/seed/industrial_hemp.html)

*Researched by Sharon Farrell and Ed Norris, ISDH Food Protection Program*

## 2015 Indiana State Fair Security

This year's Indiana State Fair was from August 8 to 23, 2015 and State FPP staff again offered assistance with food safety issues. Laurie Kidwell came into the fair many mornings around 6 a.m. to check on food security. The

goals are to have locks on ice chests, have food booths secured and to secure food deliveries promptly. Compliance is voluntary but vendors are catching on and expressed support. Pictured to the right is a secured condiment area.





# Projected **Changes** to the ISDH FPP Recall Program

Starting January 2016, ISDH Drug and Medical Devices Recall Notifications and PDF ISDH Recall Notification Letters will no longer be conducted and distributed. Instead, e-mail notifications from the ISDH FPP Consumer Specialist will be sent out containing basic information on the food and feed recalls and will contain a link to the original FDA/USDA recall. These changes are due to the shifting focus from recall notifications to voluntary recall initiations and recall audit checks.

ISDH FPP began to review our process in March 2014 following a meeting with the Michigan Department of Agriculture (Indiana's Rapid Response Team (RRT) mentor state) and the FDA Detroit District Office. The focus of the meeting was Indiana's interest in the national Rapid Response Team initiative. A major topic of interest was how Indiana handled its recall notifications, voluntary recall initiations and recall audit checks. At the time, the ISDH Food Protection Program primarily focused on recall notifications. The RRT Best Practices Manual was then used to assess ISDH's Recall Program; this revealed that only the baseline capacity (Levels 1 & 2) was met. Significant gaps were identified in recall initiations and recall audit checks. These gaps not only involve the RRT initiatives, it is also an element within MFRPS Standard 3 (a substantial initiative for ISDH FPP).

Additionally, we were unaware of the usefulness of ISDH Recall Notifications for Indiana's local health department jurisdictions. In order to have a better understanding of how local jurisdictions benefited from our ISDH Recall Notifications, we developed and distributed an ISDH Recall Notification Survey. We distributed the ISDH Recall Notification Survey in January 2015 and received responses from 56 (61%) of the 93 regulatory jurisdictions within the state. The questions ascertained that 91% of respondents used ISDH Recall Notifications and 87% found them useful.





When asked if affected parties used ISDH and/or FDA/USDA Recall Notifications, it was identified that 29% used ISDH, 23% used FDA/USDA and 57% were unsure. When asked if local jurisdictions forwarded ISDH recall notifications to affected parties, it was identified that 66% sent food, 21% sent feed, 17% sent drug, 12% sent medical devices and 28% did not send recall notifications. It was also identified that 67% of respondents had received consumer inquiries on recalls. In response to the information gathered, ISDH FPP has developed a plan to transfer some of the focus from recall notifications to initiating recalls and evaluating the effectiveness of recall processes. The RRT Best Practices Manual, MFRPS resources, partnering agencies and the findings from the recall survey were used as a basis for developing new recall procedures.

## **New Recall Notifications**

Beginning next year, ISDH FPP will no longer provide notifications for FDA Drug and Medical Devices. Furthermore, ISDH will not provide PDF letters including a summary and the original FDA/USDA Recall. E-mail notifications from the ISDH FPP Consumer Specialist will be sent out containing basic product, problem and recommended action information with a link to the original FDA/USDA recall in place of the PDF letters. Additionally, basic recall information and links to the FDA/USDA recall sites will be located on the ISDH Food Protection Recall Webpage. The e-mail recall notification will resemble the example e-mail provided in the box on the right.

## **Moving Forward**

If you would like to continue receiving FDA Drug and Medical Device Recall Notification, you may do so by going to the FDA website.

<b>DATE:</b>	January 2, 2016
<b>TO:</b>	ALL Local Health Departments  Attn: Chief Food Inspection Officer
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	Manufacturer's Name - <b>RECALL [Food/Feed]</b>
<b>PRODUCT:</b>	Name of Product
<b>ISSUE/POTENTIAL ISSUE:</b>	Description of the Problem
<b>DISTRIBUTION INFORMATION:</b>	The recalled products were distributed nationwide in retail stores.
<b>LINK TO RECALL INFORMATION:</b>	<ENTER LINK TO FDA/USDA HERE>
<b>SUGGESTED ACTION:</b>  <b>KRIS GASPERIC</b> <i>Consumer Specialist</i>  Food Protection Program Indiana State Department of Health 317-233-8475 office 317-233-9200 fax <a href="mailto:kqasperic@isdh.in.gov">kqasperic@isdh.in.gov</a>  <a href="http://www.StateHealth.in.gov">www.StateHealth.in.gov</a>      	

Recommend notification of affected parties via phone, fax, or e-mail. Consumers who have purchased the recalled products are urged to return them to the place of purchase for a full refund. Consumers with questions may contact the company at 000-000-0000 from 9 am to 4 pm CST Monday-Friday, or visit [www.manufacturer.com](http://www.manufacturer.com) for additional information. Furthermore, if any recalled products are found, notify this office at 317-233-3213.

# New School Guidelines Share Tables and Food Recovery

The Department of Education (IDOE) and ISDH collaborated to provide food safety guidelines for Sharing Tables and Food Recovery operations conducted by Indiana Schools.

Sarah Kenworthy, IDOE, Laura Hormuth, ISDH Nutrition, worked with Krista Click, Sharon Farrell and George Jones, ISDH FPP, to design this new resource.

Sharing Tables at schools are a area near the food service line where children can place unconsumed food and beverage items (pre-packaged or items with a peel) so other students can take additional helpings of food or beverages at no cost to consume on-site during the meal.

Encouraged by the USDA as a means to reduce waste, they require that the health authority is contacted about any state food safety recommendations that need to be followed. In determining what requirements apply, ISDH reviewed the Retail Food Establishment Rule and the 2013 FDA Model Food Code as well as considered a common sense approach to assure these items would be protected and safe for the next child.

Key considerations were prevention from tampering or contamination

and temperature control.

A trained worker will be needed to monitor the table. Students may either drop foods off at the end of the tray line or bring back items from their trays once it has left the line. It was decided that items that are pre-packed non Potentially hazardous Food (PHF) may be next donated to a 501 (c) (3) organization but that milk may not. The basis for this is 410 IAC 7-24 that allows for crackers, etc to be returned to



the kitchen.

Schools are instructed to contact the local health department prior to implantation so that LHDs may do a plan review or pre-operational inspection.

The Recovery Process is not new

and should be the same as any donation process. Schools do have a layer of legal protection through the national Good Samaritan rule.

The organization **FOOD+RESCUE** spearheaded the project in Indiana. **John Williamson** is President and Founder of the project and has expressed his passion for this project. He can be contacted at [jw@foodrescue.net](mailto:jw@foodrescue.net), the Food Rescue Blog and at [foodrescue.wordpress.com](http://foodrescue.wordpress.com) or at [www.foodrescue.net](http://www.foodrescue.net).

The guidance documents are on the Food Protection webpage at: <http://www.in.gov/isdh/24884.htm>

By Sharon Farrell ISDH FPP and Krista Click, Director, ISDH FPP

## ISDH FPP Recall Program

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website at:

<http://www.fda.gov/Safety/Recalls/default.htm> and clicking on Sign up to receive Recalls, Market Alerts and Safety Alerts. Choose an e-mail delivery preference and click on Subscriber Preferences, Add Subscriptions, and choose MedWatch, and Medical Device Safety and Recalls under Medical Devices and click Submit. You may also click on the same hyperlink and choose Recall and Safety Alerts Archive to view recalls notices older than 60 days.

### Recall Initiation and Audit Checks

In addition to establishing a new recall notification process, procedures have been developed for assisting in the initiation of voluntary recalls after identifying violative products. Violative products may be identified during regulatory inspections, surveillance sampling or as a result of a foodborne illness investigation. Audit check procedures are being developed for ISDH FPP to assess the effectiveness of a firm's voluntary recall. The extent of the

audit check will be based upon the characteristics of the associated problem and distribution of the product.

By Laurie Kidwell, ISDH RRP Coordinator



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## Food Geek to Chic equipment for your best Inspection

*Continued from page 3*

is not already made up, the establishment is not required to make it up, however, ask those questions and ask how they test the sanitizer. If the establishment is unable to test it for you, they are dependent on your kit so have an adequate supply on hand.

I usually carry a Q-10 & Q-40 along with a chlorine test kit. Depending on your preference, wax heat strips or a waterproof thermometer is required to test a “hot” ware washing machine. I like to place the blackened strip on the inspection report as documentation, however, the thermometer will give a real number to match the data plate.

**In my need for adventure, one of my favorite tools is the flash-light.** Not too big, too heavy or bulky. It has to be easy to turn on with a simple thumb movement, be dependable and have a high power bulb for the best illumination in dark areas. While a big Mag light might be perfect for housing inspection, this light has to be easy to operate in small, tight spaces, store easy and be easy to grab. While you may be tempted to use your cell phone in this capacity, keep a few things in mind. How professional does it look when you are running it under the nozzles? How bright is it and how long will the charge last over an extended period of time? With a professionally designed flashlight, right illumination and fresh batteries, you will be ready to take on any challenge.

I am also a fan of black lights to search out possible protein stains; however, the one I confiscated from the Glow Germ kit does not work in well lightened areas. The FDA suggests using an ultraviolet UV366 nm handheld flashlight. With this, you can look for urine stains in the brightest lights, it's handy, less bulky and more durable than the wand. Both flashlights are a great educational tool if you discover rodent scat or debris in a food establishment.

**Another tool I would never**

**leave the department without is my digital camera, also with extra fresh batteries.** Whether you are documenting the general conditions of the establishment or the equipment itself, a picture tells a thousand words. Some inspectors I know are hesitant to take pictures but even in the worst conditions, the positive side is using the pictures as a “before, and after”, especially in the case of a closure. How bad is bad? The picture says it all and date stamp makes for easy organization and documentation.

A mirror is imperative to look under, behind and inside some pieces of equipment such as the under plate of an ice machine or soft drink nozzles. I use a cleaned and sanitized compact mirror but also have a small, angled dental mirror too. Less invasive and easier to show the person in charge exactly what you're seeing.

You can never have too many alcohol swabs, a supply of food service gloves and extra hair nets/beard guards and business cards.

For safety purposes and as a multi-use tool, keep your cell phone charged, emergency/department phone numbers entered and ready to use. **Don't get caught in a bad situation without being prepared.**

To write up the actual inspection report, it's important to be organized as digging through a computer bag for a dead printer battery is an annoying hassle. At a temporary event having the paper inspection report filled out and extra narrative pages is helpful. I usually carry a copy of the last inspection report to refer back to as needed although I review the file before leaving the office. My computer bag is also where I carry educational and administrative information, my food code, guidance documents, extra printer paper and the county ordinances. Once again, bring extra batteries, chargers and ink cartridges to “get'r done”. While I don't carry a foodborne illness kit or sampling supplies into the establish-

ment on regular basis, do have them handy, at least in your vehicle.

**When I started my career in food protection, I was unaware of how important field equipment would be.** Now looking back at the equipment that I borrowed from the full time inspector, it's embarrassing that I would have been so unprepared. Many of us are also at the mercy of highly scrutinized budgets and don't have access to the latest and greatest food inspection trends. However, as we all grow and develop our skills as professionals over the years, ethically we should make sure that we are aware of the importance of a fair and professional inspection to each establishment in our jurisdiction.

A food establishment inspection can only be as good as the inspector makes it. With your inspection kit fully loaded with the best organized equipment you have available to you, the daily grind becomes more of a positive challenge.

**Don't be afraid of that inner food geek and enjoy that challenge for you and for public health!**

*By Sharon Pattee, ISDH FPP  
MFRPS Grant, Training Coordinator*

# A critical look at professional inspection toys (tools)

The FDA Model Food Code and Voluntary Retail Standard 8 both describe basic equipment recommendations for inspectors. Listed also is some *as needed* equipment and suggestions for how to “borrow” other resources for some of these items should you need them.

Below are tips to save you time when you start your next equipment purchase search and justification. Researching online can be confusing and may not tell you all you need to know. To get something that actually works well, ask yourself: is it simple and easy to operate, easy to read, non-toxic to food, portable, easy to calibrate, holds up when stored in the trunk of your car, is relatively inexpensive and is it versatile enough for use in a variety of settings found in the real world retail inspection environment. Back in 2006, Food Safety Magazine published “The Best of the Best: A Critical Look at Basic Inspection-Tools” still available at: <http://www.foodsafetymagazine.com/magazine-archive1/aprilmay-2006/the-best-of-the-best-a-critical-look-at-basic-inspection-tools/> and we took a look at the recommendations to compare with what we have purchased and to see if these products are still available.

FDA Model Food Code Basic Tool Kit (Annex 5 – page 592 2013 FDA Model Food Code

## Thermometry



You will need at least one calibrated thermometer but it is recommended that you have several different temperature measuring devices. If you can only have one, you will need a good quality thermocouple. But if you can afford it, you should also consider owning several stem thermometers, a min/max waterproof (lollipop type) that can go

through a dish machine, and an infrared thermometer, especially helpful to get a surface reading, and especially helpful at truck inspections. Make sure you get a National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) certificate that guarantees accuracy. Our experience is that we can get the NIST certificate included in the price.

### 1. Thermocouples with the appropriate probes for the food being tested

A thermocouple is different from a thermometer. It is made up of a bi-metal combination that makes it faster than a thermometer. It comes with a variety of probe options and choice of stem or corded connections. A basic thermocouple will cost several hundred dollars with one basic probe. Currently ISDH inspectors use the Adkins AccuTuff 351 that comes with a probe on a cord and the Adkins Versa Tuff 396 in combination with an Adkins K probe on a cord. Food Safety Magazine recommendations were the Comark C28, the VersaTuff 386 or the AccuTuff model #34040.

We have tried a combination thermometer, infrared traceable waterproof HACCP Thermometer from Control Company in place of a thermocouple due to the need for a compact instrument. It is relatively inexpensive, has held up, is accurate and is very portable. It comes with a NIST certificate. Our issues with it are battery life, ease of changing batteries and some confusing instructions on how to switch from °F to °C. Also it is advertised as waterproof but is actually water resistant within advertised parameters.

### 2. Stem thermometers

These are inexpensive and if you have several, can be placed in several foods at a time. You may even get samples from companies and if NSF or NIST labeled are fine after a quick verification check. It is recommended the distance from the tip to the dimple does not exceed 2” and the shorter the better. They

cost less than \$9 each.

### 3. Thermistor thermometer

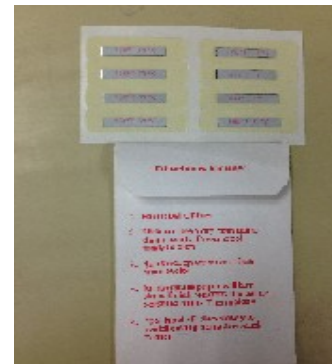
These are similar to the stem thermometers but are also waterproof and have min/ max reading settings and cost under \$50. These are also good for situations where you only have one hand available. We use and highly recommend the DeltaTrak Lollipop model #11036 but have found that the clear plastic sleeves break. Food Safety Magazine recommended ones with a sleeve for the stem.

### 4. Infrared thermometers

Infrareads come in inexpensive designs and can cost thousands for ones with lots of additional features such a picture recording device. We use the Fluke 62 max unit that runs in the \$50-100 range and these do fine for checking surface temperatures. Be sure you understand the “cone” of accuracy in order to get the correct reading.

Food code rules require that thermometric instruments be accurate within  $\pm 2^{\circ}\text{F}$ ,  $+ 1^{\circ}\text{C}$ .

The NIST certificate guarantees the accuracy. Remember that you can usually get free repair or replacement if your device fails within the warranty. If doing on the spot checks, be sure to use distilled water and ice that is of shaved consistency. Tap or well water can affect the freezing point of water by several degrees. We clean our probes with food grade alcohol wipes after each food measurement.



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# A critical look at professional inspection toys (tools)

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## Sanitizer Test Kits

For most situations you will need 3 types of test papers and could possibly need a kit for iodine.



**Chlorine** – use a test paper that is accurate from 10 to 200.



**Quat 10**– use a test paper that is accurate from 0 – 400 and follow directions that come with the kit.



**Quat 40**– use a test paper that is accurate from 0 – 500 and follow directions that come with the kit. Do not be misled by the ranges and think that you can get by with just a Quat 40 kit. Check the type of quat sanitizer that is being used and the listed type of Quat test paper for that product. The newer generations of quats all use the Quat 40 paper.

## Paper Thermometer

The heat sensitive tape is mainly used for dish machines and is sometimes preferred, although rather expensive, due to having a record to attach to your inspection report. We use the 1 temperature model 160°F, 71°C from [www.paperthermometer.com](http://www.paperthermometer.com).

## Flashlight

The flashlight has many uses from checking for “scat”, insects and rodents to illuminating dark areas such as nozzles and slicers.

We recommend an LED model with as bright a lumen level as you can afford. Some inspectors like the available light on their phones. Others point out that phones are huge germ carriers and avoid having them in the food production

area. Some recommended models are “Steamlight 4AA ProPolymers LED” and the “Lightwave Infintion C3 or D3” flashlights.

You may want to consider a UV light. The smaller UV lights can also be used with Glo Germ Safety classes to illuminate the powder. Food Safety magazine recommends the Inova X5. One caution, some “black lights” come with eye protection warnings that require special protective glasses be worn by the user. ISDH inspector Andrew Miller highly recommends using a good UV light to detect rodent issues and it should be noted that Andrew is both a good resource as well as having a huge success with insect/rodent inspection findings.

## Head Cover/beard cover

The head cover can be a baseball cap, hair net or equivalent. Our inspectors are supplied with the white paper hats but most prefer ball caps. With the popularity of male facial hair, the beard cover is mandatory. We found one that is “see thru” and works best. Cost for a recent beard cover order was about \$10/100.

## Optional equipment

You may be able to borrow pH meters, ATP meters and light meters

### Pocket pH meter recommendation from Purdue

Oakton Waterproof pH meter, ~ \$115.

<http://www.coleparmer.com/Product/Oakton-Waterproof-pH-Tester-10-BNC-Pocket-pH-Tester/SC-35634-14>

Recommended by Kevin Keener, Ph.D., P.E., Professor of Food Science and Food Process Engineering, Purdue University

[www.foodsci.purdue.edu](http://www.foodsci.purdue.edu)

from the ISDH FPP or as an alternative contact Purdue University, for a pH test. The contact at Purdue is

Rhonda Miller, [taylor236@purdue.edu](mailto:taylor236@purdue.edu).

pH test strips can be used to give a very rough estimate of pH.

The FDA model food codes lists optional equipment as:

- Pressure gauge for determining in-line pressure of hot water at injection point of warewashing machine (5-30 psi)
- Light meter – ISDH FPP has some that can be borrowed
- Measuring device for measuring distances
- Time/temperature data logger
- pH meter
- Water activity meter – Purdue recommends getting this test through them due to high price of equipment.
- Camera - ISDH FPP considers this standard equipment
- Computers with or without an electronic inspection system – We recommend Code-Pal
- Black light - see above: ISDH FPP considers this standard equipment
- Foodborne illness inspection kits – contact ISDH FPP for assistance
- Sample collection kits (ISDH FPP and ISDH labs will supply these at no cost)
- Cell phones

ISDH FPP inspectors suggest carrying a tape measure, mirror and thin tool for checking cracks in deteriorating slicers for soil. There have been instances where ISDH FPP has needed to check flow of drainage and uses a dye pack in that case.



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### **FIND US ON THE WEB!**

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## **Indiana State Department of Health**

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or postal address on this page.

## **Tidbits, Crumbs and Leftovers**

Check out the Partnership for Food Protection  
Summer 2015 Newsletter at:

<http://www.fda.gov/downloads/ForFederalStateandLocalOfficials/FoodSafetySystem/PartnershipforFoodProtectionPFP/UCM458266.pdf>

Featured on page 4 is the new Surveillance, Response and Post Response Workgroup (Response Workgroup "Best Practices for Use of Food SHIELD During Food and Feed Incidents").



## **NEWSLETTER**

**YOUR PATHWAY TO RESOURCES**

### **A Letter from the Governing Council**

As we move into summer, it seems like just yesterday we were all in St. Louis sitting around the same table to develop our goals for the PFP Strategic Plan. I'm happy to report that we are well on our way to meeting our objectives. Our Training and Certification Workgroup is working on the first annual Training Summit. Our Surveillance, Response, and Post-Response Workgroup disseminated best practices for using FoodSHIELD during recall incidents. Our project managers have been hard at work providing administrative guidance for the workgroups as they meet their objectives. The PFP is working hard on developing an integrated food safety system and the Governing Council wants to thank everyone for their continued dedication.

PFP newsletters focus on bringing you stories and articles on integration and collaboration throughout all of our stakeholders. Newsletter content consists of original pieces from our PFP members and spotlight PFP partners and the work they are doing outside of the PFP. Our goals of integration and collaboration don't stop when we take off our PFP hats and we need to be cognizant of that going forward. We want to bring you stories on local health departments working to supply safe food using community gardens, and what our state partners are doing in response to the avian flu outbreak to show that promoting food safety and public health are responsibilities of everyone, at all levels of government. Through sharing such efforts with our partners in our newsletters, we hope we can initiate dialog and share ideas as we all work to keep the public safe.

As you read through this newsletter, the GC and the Outreach Workgroup ask that you think about how PFP can better disseminate its message of integration and collaboration. What can we do better? What's working and what's not? Please share your thoughts with us at [PFP@fda.hhs.gov](mailto:PFP@fda.hhs.gov). We look forward to keeping our communications lines open and appreciate your input. Please reach out to Ryan Cates and or Troy Huffman, our talented Outreach Workgroup leads, if you have contributions for future PFP Newsletters.

Lastly, although there is much to do on the food safety integration front, we hope everyone is enjoying their summer (and even maybe able to relax and enjoy a cold drink)! The PFP GC wishes you a safe and happy summer and we look forward to working with you in the future.

Barbara Cassens  
Governing Council Co-Chair

Pat Kennedy  
Governing Council Co-Chair

### **In Case You Missed It**

Learning from the Onida:  
Food and Fellowship at the Heart  
of a Community

Local Health Department Plants  
Community Garden to Support  
Food Bank, Healthy Eating

USDA Goes All in for Produce  
Safety Outreach

### **Upcoming Events**

2015 NASDA Annual Meeting  
September 13 - 16  
Kailua-Kona, Hawaii

2015 AFDOSS Fall Conference  
September 13 - 16  
Gallatin, Tennessee

2015 COSDA Annual Meeting  
October 25 - 28  
Des Moines, Iowa

2015 ASTHO Annual Meeting  
September 30 - October 1  
Salt Lake City, Utah

### **Summer Tips**

Make sure you're  
[Grilling Like a Pro](#)

Remember the  
[Safe Cooking Temperatures](#)  
and [Always Be Prepared](#)

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PFP Governing Council Members  
A Message from the PFP Governing Council  
PFP Strategic Plan • FY 2015-2020

PFP Vision and Mission  
50-State Workshops/Meetings  
Current PFP Workgroups

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